

Exhibit A

THE HILL SCHOOL HANDBOOK



2015-2016

WWW.THEHILL.ORG

Dear Students and Parents,

I continue to be excited and honored to serve as the Dean of Students at The Hill and to live and raise my family here in this amazing community. Our Core Tenets and Mission statement, that you will find on the next pages, describe and shape who we are and work to be as a school and community, so I hope you will examine them carefully. As you will read and have heard from the Headmaster or our Admission Office, we are committed to Hill as The Family Boarding School. I believe you will see that the entire Handbook, our expectations, structures, programs and policies, resonate with the idea of family.

The adults of our community value and work toward close relationships with our students so that we can appropriately and individually challenge each student in his or her growth to maturity. The uniqueness of a boarding school is that education here is not just inside the classroom, and in fact, the true lifelong lessons may be learned on the playing field, in the dormitory, across the lunch or dinner table, or in any number of other places and times. Living and learning with students throughout the entire day is a privilege and opportunity that makes every interaction a potential lesson.

This handbook, required reading for all students and parents, lays out how our Hill family works and is guided by our School motto of "Whatsoever things are true." The lessons from the history and traditions of The Hill School combined with decades of experience from administrators and faculty here at Hill are reflected in this handbook, and we have worked diligently to explain clearly our programs and expectations. We still rely on your common sense and commitment to follow "Whatsoever things are true" in order to make our school a place where everyone can best reach their potential. I look forward to seeing how the contributions of each student and family make the year ahead one of our best.

Sincerely,



David B. Allain
Dean of Students

This Handbook is an informational guide only and not a statement of contractually binding terms. The services, programs, and policies of The Hill School are reviewed continually and changed in order to better achieve its educational mission and philosophy. Therefore, The Hill School reserves the right to amend, modify, add to, or delete its rules, policies, and procedures in its sole and exclusive discretion without notice. In the pages that follow, duties that are assigned to specific administrators, such as the Dean of Students, an Assistant Head, or the Headmaster, may be delegated to another person under appropriate circumstances.

This information is current as of July 28, 2015.

Our Core Tenets

Summary: Founded in 1851, The Hill School is a purposefully small and close learning community — a place where our academic excellence is based upon a challenging liberal arts curriculum and innovative teaching; a faculty of highly qualified, dedicated teachers; a noteworthy breadth of advanced and honors course offerings; and a structured atmosphere that blends high expectations with meaningful support.



THE HILL SCHOOL
THE FAMILY BOARDING SCHOOL

COMMUNITY. *The Hill School is an exceptionally close learning community*, a place where faculty and students treat each other as family — where teachers know and care for their students as individuals and students form lifelong friendships. *Purposefully smaller than most peer schools*, The Hill originally was known as The Family Boarding School and today's diverse students, parents, alumni, and visitors continue to cite Hill's definitive feeling of family.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE. *The Hill School's reputation for academic excellence is based upon a challenging liberal arts curriculum, innovative teaching, and a highly qualified, dedicated faculty.* Intellectual growth is cultivated through a noteworthy breadth of advanced and honors course offerings.

MEANINGFUL, BALANCED STRUCTURE. *The Hill School provides meaningful, balanced structure* in a supportive atmosphere where shared community expectations sharpen each student's focus, promote personal responsibility, build self-confidence, and form the foundation for future achievement. Students' leadership and time management skills are further developed through high-caliber extracurricular options.

PRINCIPLES. *The Hill School values and nurtures principles* of honesty and genuineness, courtesy and respect, and gratitude and concern for the greater good. At The Hill, character is not so much taught as subtly lived, as represented in the School's revered motto, "*Whatsoever things are true.*"

HISTORY AND TRADITIONS. *The Hill School is proud of its history and traditions*, unique threads dating back to 1851 that connect the quality of Hill's past with the vigor and excellence of its future.



Mission Statement

The Hill School prepares young men and women from across the country and around the world for college, careers, and life. Within a family school environment and a rigorous liberal arts curriculum, we challenge our young people to work hard; think and reason; be fulfilled; serve the common good; and be prepared to lead as citizens of the world, uniquely guided by our motto, “Whatsoever Things Are True.”

LEVEL 3 OFFENSES

Students are expected to know the difference between right and wrong. The policies included in this handbook guide the School's application of the disciplinary and honor system. The

Level 3 Offenses include our major rule infractions which most likely will result in a Discipline Committee or Honor Council hearing.

A student who fails to fulfill the basic responsibilities may lose the privilege of attending The Hill School, either temporarily in the case of suspension, or permanently in the case of required withdrawal. The Headmaster, without convening the Discipline Committee, has the right to require the immediate withdrawal of any student at any time. Students who are required to withdraw from the School, or withdraw in the face of disciplinary action, may not return to campus until a year after their form is graduated.

The following are major School rules; infractions of either the letter or the spirit of these rules are serious disciplinary matters and often lead to suspension or dismissal. Students knowingly in the presence of these rule violations add support by their presence and may also be held accountable.

Substance Use Students are expected to remain drug and alcohol free at all times. The use of illegal drugs and/or alcohol and the misuse of over-the-counter or prescription drugs by students on or off campus harm both individuals and the community (refer to Medication Policy, p. 48). It violates federal, state, and local laws; it adversely affects the individual's physical, mental, and emotional development; and it lowers the expectations of other students by setting a poor example of what it is to be a student at The Hill. The School is committed to preventing the use of drugs and alcohol by Hill students, especially in our dormitories. The School must ensure that our dormitories are safe havens for all residents. Every student in school must be assured that his or her residence will be a safe, wholesome place, free of alcohol and illegal drugs. Therefore, a student found in possession of alcohol or illegal drugs, or under their influence in the dormitory, will be required to withdraw from the School immediately.

The Discipline Committee will not review violations of our alcohol and drug rules in the dormitory. Instead, in such cases the student will be immediately dismissed, following a proper

investigation (that determines his or her guilt beyond a reasonable doubt).

The Discipline Committee will have discretion to respond appropriately to violations of these school rules that occur elsewhere. In making recommendations, the Discipline Committee will take into account both a student's record and mitigating circumstances, always mindful of what is best for the individual and best for the School community overall.

In substance use cases where the Headmaster decides that a student may remain a part of the community, the following steps will be automatically implemented in addition to any prescribed punishment:

1. Conduct Warning
2. Counseling
3. Mandatory random drug testing

Before a problem comes to the attention of the Deans' Office, a student, his or her parents, or his or her friends can seek confidential assistance, counseling, and testing through Counseling Services (p. 50). Involvement with counseling does not preclude disciplinary action should a violation of School rules come to the attention of the Deans' Office.

Alcohol and Drugs Students may not distribute or be in possession of illegal drugs or alcohol (including drug paraphernalia), or under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while under the supervision of The Hill School. Abuse of over-the-counter or prescription medication is considered a serious violation and students will be held to the same standards as mentioned above. Dormitory violations of our Substance Use policy are especially serious offenses. The School will strive to maintain our dormitories as safe havens for our students. If a student's behavior gives a faculty member cause for concern, that student will be confronted immediately. If this confrontation leads the faculty member to believe that the student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the student will be escorted to the Health Center and examined by a nurse, and the Dean on Duty will be called. If there is still question in the minds of this group concerning the use of drugs or alcohol, then the Dean, in consultation with the nurse and faculty member, will require a drug test so that proper care may be given.

Drug Testing Drug testing can be a useful tool for protecting a student's health and welfare and providing motivation for a student to remain drug free. The Hill School reserves the right to test students for drugs or alcohol, and when appropriate, place a student in a mandatory random testing program. The primary goal of this testing is the long term well-being of the student. We hope testing will prevent a student from developing a drug or alcohol problem and/or keep him or her from the pain and consequences of a required withdrawal or suspension. Refusal to take a test will be treated as if the test results were positive. Evidence of attempted adulteration or refusal to cooperate with testing procedures in any way, will also be handled as if the test results were positive.

Room and Locker Search

A student's room or locker will be searched only if a faculty member and a Dean concur that there is reason to believe it contains stolen items, drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, or other hazardous materials. The student and at least two faculty members will be present during the search.

Drug Testing (continued)

Testing may be by any scientifically accepted method selected by the School, including analysis of blood, breath, saliva, urine, or hair. Testing is done by an approved outside laboratory and the fee is set by the laboratory, not by the School. Parents are responsible for the cost of the tests.

A student in the mandatory substance testing program who tests positive for illegal drugs or alcohol will likely be required to withdraw from The Hill School. Subject to the legitimate interests of The Hill School and its students, efforts will be made to maintain the privacy of students required to undergo drug or alcohol testing.

Tobacco Students may not be in possession of or use tobacco or nicotine products in any form -- including but not limited to cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, vaporizers, chewing tobacco, and dip. A first offense will result in restriction for five days, a weekend of detention, and participation in a tobacco cessation program. In addition, students in possession of a vaporizer will be drug tested. A second offense will result in suspension or an appearance before the Discipline Committee. A third offense will result in immediate dismissal from the School. Indoor smoking involving a lit flame is grounds for dismissal (see Open Flames and Fire Hazards).

Open Flames and Fire Hazards The possession or use of an open flame, including matches, lighters, candles, cigarettes, incense, fireworks or any other fire hazard in a school building, is a serious safety threat to the members of our community. Violators will appear before the Discipline Committee.

Disreputable Behavior A student should not show blatant disrespect towards the community or its individual members. There should be no intentional action that disrupts the operation of the School community, or endangers the physical, mental, or emotional health of its members, or brings discredit to the School. Breaking federal, state, or local laws is considered disreputable behavior. Any excessive or repeated failure to meet school duties or expectations is also disreputable behavior. This includes the purchase, possession, use, or creation of counterfeit documents, e.g. driver licenses, ID cards, etc.

Excessive Demerits or Repeated Restrictions Students may not exceed the demerit limit three times in one school year or exceed the limit by four demerits. Students who repeatedly earn restriction will likely appear before the Discipline Committee.

Getting Help for Yourself or Another (I Care)

While we believe our policies around drugs and alcohol work to deter student use and help the School maintain a safer community, we do know that a percentage of students will continue to experiment with substance use. Students who do this endanger their lives and their Hill School careers. With the ultimate priority of students' physical well-being in mind we have created the I Care (Immediate Care) system that will allow students to get help for themselves or other students without the threat of a disciplinary response. I Care allows students to care for each other by seeking the assistance of an adult in dangerous situations without fear of dismissal or other disciplinary action.

Basic Principles of I Care

1. A student may bring him/herself or another student under the influence of a substance, or information concerning risky behavior related to substance use, to any adult in the community without fear of a disciplinary response.
2. Must be student initiated.
 - a. Not valid if an adult has already observed, obtained evidence, or is investigating that a violation has occurred. In other words, students are bringing information to adults that they do not already have or would not otherwise become available to adults.
 - b. Faculty who observe or discover a violation are expected to follow established disciplinary procedures.
3. Students who take advantage of this system will be put on a no-use contract, randomly drug tested, and assessed and counseled as recommended by the Counseling Office.
4. When a faculty member is following up on an I Care report, the student in question must cooperate fully and be honest about their situation. If a student denies being under the influence or refuses to cooperate with the faculty member, they will be subject to discipline.
5. A student who violates his or her no-use contract by either a positive drug test or another use of the I Care system will be dismissed.

Specifics

- Students may call or go to any adult (Security, dorm parent or other faculty member, Health Center) on campus with information about another student under the influence. A friend who cares will ideally escort his or her friend to an adult, but may need to care enough to simply let an adult know about another student's current dangerous situation.
- The above must be done before any adult discovers or is investigating that a violation has occurred.
- We encourage students to care so much about their friend's health and Hill career that they act immediately when they know of or see another student under the influence.
- Once a student takes advantage of the I Care system, he or she will be taken to the Health Center for proper medical care.

Coed Visitation Students may not enter halls or dormitories assigned to the opposite sex. However, students seeking help from a faculty member who lives in a dormitory that houses the opposite sex may visit the faculty member from an outside or stairwell door.

After October 1st, designated common rooms are open to coed visitation, hours are posted in dormitories.

Sexual Intimacy The Hill educates students in all aspects of their lives — the intellectual, physical, spiritual, and moral — and even in how they relate to one another. We encourage among our students warm, supportive friendships, which we believe are fundamental to the proper development of young people; however, we insist that students refrain from intimate sexual relationships, which distract youngsters from achieving the self-discipline of mature young adults. The School has equal expectations for students regardless of their sexual orientation.

Hill students who engage in such intimate relationships must consider two important matters. First they face disciplinary action, including possible separation from the School. Violations will be referred to the Executive Council in lieu of the Discipline Committee. Second, they face other risks: the possibility of pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, and HIV. Students who become pregnant, those who father children, and those who are married will be required to withdraw from the School.

We believe that students should learn of those risks through confidential counsel from the School's physicians, nursing staff, counselors, chaplains, and faculty, and should discuss those matters with their parents as well. Consistent with the School's position on this important subject, our Health Center does not provide students condoms or other contraceptive devices. We believe also that the School should, through instruction and counsel, help each student to develop a strong character that emphasizes individual responsibility, self-respect, and respect for others.

Finally, we recognize the many pressures that young people nowadays feel to engage in sexual activity; we hope that the School's position empowers and supports them to resist those pressures.

Bullying and Hazing Bullying, verbal or physical intimidation, or hazing is unacceptable behavior in our community. At the heart of each of these is unkind, cruel, or threatening behavior to others that is easily recognized and completely inappropriate. Cyber-bullying, the sending or posting of hurtful text or images to or about others, using any sort of digital device (computer, cell phone, or any other sort of personal digital assistant) will not be tolerated and will be dealt with severely. Physical confrontations will most likely result in an off-campus suspension or, in serious cases, an appearance before the Discipline Committee. This includes whitewashing, binding, taping, and restraining another person. None of the above behavior can be justified by the claim it was "in fun," "just teasing," a joke or prank.

Harassment The Hill School is a community in which every individual is to be treated with dignity, respect, and esteem. The School forbids physical, verbal, or psychological harassment of any kind directed against any individual or group of individuals. Harassment includes both easily identified acts of oral, written, digital photos or videos, or physical abuse, and more subtle, but equally damaging forms of harassment, such as graffiti, epithets, and racially stereotyped remarks or racially stereotyped jokes. Harassment targeting ethnic heritage, religious beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, race, age, disability, or participation in protected activity under the discrimination laws is of particular concern.

Sexual Harassment Policy:

a. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical or psychological conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or participation in an educational program.
- (2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions or for academic evaluation or advancement.
- (3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

b. Sexual harassment is not social or courting behavior. It is unwanted and unwanted and is often an assertion of power.

c. Sexual harassment may include:

- (1) Physical assault, including rape, or any coerced sexual relations;
- (2) Subtle pressure for sexual activity or for a relationship that takes on a sexual or romantic coloring, thereby exceeding the limits of a healthy student/student, adult/student, or adult/adult friendship;
- (3) Any demeaning sexual propositions;
- (4) Unnecessary touching in any form;
- (5) Sexually explicit or suggestive remarks about a person's physical attributes, clothing, or behavior;
- (6) Verbal abuse; or
- (7) Inappropriate personal questions.

Sexual harassment includes written and oral remarks, whether emailed, texted, posted online, or messages left on voice mail systems.

Sexual Harassment Policy (continued...)

d. Procedure for Investigation of Complaints and Enforcement: Anyone who believes that he or she has been, or is being, harassed by a fellow student or by a School employee, contractor, parent, alumnus, or volunteer should promptly take the following action:

- (1) Tell the harasser politely but firmly that his or her conduct is not welcome and must stop.
- (2) If the conduct persists, or if the harassed individual is afraid for any reason to confront the harasser, or if the harassed individual believes she or he has been retaliated against by the harasser for invoking Step (1), or if the harassed individual believes that the accused's conduct involves a threat of adverse academic action for refusing to participate in sexual activities, or a promise of academic advancement if the individual does participate in sexual activities, then the harassed individual should bring the problem confidentially to the attention of the School official designated in paragraph (3) below. The individual may do so without fear of any retaliation, humiliation, or recrimination.
- (3) The official designated to receive complaints of harassment from students is the Assistant Headmaster for Student Life. If the student making the complaint is more comfortable with the Dean of Students, he or she may make the complaint to that person.
- (4) The official receiving the complaint of harassment will lead an investigation of any such allegations of harassment in as confidential a manner as is reasonably possible. As a part of the investigation, the investigating officials reserve the right to speak with individuals within the School community and legal counsel for the School. The accused individual will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations, but ordered not to confront or retaliate against the complaining person concerning the allegations. If possible, neutral witnesses will be interrogated, again in confidence. All participants in the investigation will be instructed to keep the matter strictly confidential and will be disciplined if they fail to do so.

- (5) At the conclusion of the investigation, if it is reasonably determined that it is more likely than not that harassment has occurred, the perpetrator will be subject to appropriate discipline up to and including expulsion from attendance, and other remedial steps may be taken. Such remedial steps may include separating the individuals' educational relationships or expunging any documents created by the harassment, such as an unfair performance review or grade of the harassed person by the harasser. The complaining party and the harasser shall both be informed of the results of the investigation.

(6) Retaliation in any form against the complainant who has exercised his or her right to make a complaint under this policy is strictly prohibited, even if the investigation concludes that no harassment has occurred. Retaliation will be cause for appropriate discipline, up to and including required withdrawal from School.

(7) The Hill School views any unfounded, baseless accusation of harassment to be a serious offense. Therefore, if The Hill School concludes that an individual has wrongfully accused any individual of harassment, The Hill School reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action against such an individual, up to and including required withdrawal from School.

Security and Trespassing Violations Students may not possess or use unauthorized keys, access cards, locks, computer passwords, or fire extinguishers. Tampering with door locks, electrical wiring, smoke detectors, or fire alarms endangers all dorm occupants and will not be tolerated. In addition, students may not be in a locked room (dorm, classroom, etc.).

Trespassing, gaining entrance to a locked building, or being in a restricted area including digital spaces in any fashion is a major rule violation. Propping open any locked outer dormitory door on campus jeopardizes the safety of its occupants.

Weapons and Firearms Students may not be in possession of firearms, weapons, knives, or any items resembling firearms or weapons. Paintball guns must be turned in to the Business Office for storage.

Motor Vehicle Misuse Some incidents of motor vehicle violations may result in an appearance before the Discipline Committee.

Dormitory Curfew Students may not leave the dormitory after check in until 6:00 a.m. the following morning and then must remain on campus until the end of the academic day. Only those granted specific permission by a faculty member may travel between dormitories after check in. Students are not to leave the dormitory to pick up food deliveries.

Street Smarts (in Pottstown and any other town or city)

- Travel in groups of two or more.
- Use High Street—travel east.
- Use public roads; do not walk through private property.
- Wear a helmet if biking and observe traffic signs; be aware!